

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-7 (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) A process for fabricating a ~~water-swellable filter~~ porous plug, comprising the steps of
providing a filter porous substrate comprising a plurality of passageways therethrough,
disposing into the passageways a hydrophilic polymer,
subsequent to the disposing step, irradiating the substrate and the hydrophilic polymer, to
induce cross-linking of the hydrophilic polymer, such that the polymer forms a hydrogel coating
on the walls of the passageways, wherein the hydrogel coating swells upon contact with water.

9. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 8, wherein the ~~filter porous~~ substrate is formed from a plastic.

10. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 8, wherein the hydrophilic polymer is selected from the group consisting of polyalkyleneoxides, polyvinylpyrrolidone, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinylacetate, polyhydroxyalkyl, polystyrene sulfonate, and mixtures thereof.

11. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 10, wherein the hydrophilic polymer is polyvinylpyrrolidone.

12. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 8, wherein the irradiation is gamma irradiation or electron beam irradiation.